

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-15 EB-08 IO-14 ACDA-12 TRSE-00 OMB-01 /119 W

-----077737 220630Z /11

R 210830Z MAR 78

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9902

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

CINCPAC HONOLULU

UNCLAS SINGAPORE 1304

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PEPR, MMOL, IO, SN

SUBJECT: BBC REPORT ON U.S. MILITARY AIRCRAFT USE OF SINGAPORE AIRPORT

1. FOLLOWING ARE NEWS REPORT AND COMMENTARY BROADCAST BY BBC ON MORNING OF MARCH 21 ON U.S. REQUEST TO USE SINGAPORE AIRPORT FACILITIES FOR MILITARY FLIGHTS.

2. "NEWS ITEMS: THE UNITED STATES HAS ASKED SINGAPORE IF IT CAN MAKE USE OF ITS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AS A STAGING BASE FOR MILITARY AIRCRAFT COVERING THE INDIAN OCEAN. THE AIRPORT IS DUE TO BE TAKEN OUT OF SERVICE OVER THE NEXT TWO YEARS.

"THE BBC'S SOUTH EAST ASIA CORRESPONDENT SAYS THE U.S. AIR FORCE HAS UNTIL RECENTLY BEEN USING THAILAND AS A STOP-OVER FOR INDIAN OCEAN FLIGHTS, BUT SINCE THE NEW GOVERNMENT TOOK OVER IN THAILAND LAST OCTOBER, USE HAS BEEN MADE OF SOME FACILITIES AVAILABLE IN SINGAPORE.

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"COMMENTARY: THE MILITARY PRESENCE OF THE AMERICANS AND RUSSIANS IN THE INDIAN OCEAN HAS FOR LONG BEEN A CONTENTIOUS ISSUE FOR MANY OF THE COUNTRIES IN THE AREA. NOW THERE'S LIKELY TO BE MORE CONCERN OVER THE NEWS THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS ASKED SINGAPORE IF IT CAN MAKE USE OF ITS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AS A STAGING BASE FOR MILITARY AIRCRAFT.

"OUR SOUTH EAST ASIA CORRESPONDENT, ADRIAN PORTER REPORTS:

'UNTIL RECENTLY, AMERICAN AIR FORCE PLANES HAVE BEEN USING TA KHLI AIRPORT IN THAILAND AS A STOPOVER BASE FOR ITS INDIAN OCEAN FLIGHT, BUT FOLLOWING THE NEW GOVERNMENT IN THAILAND SINCE LAST OCTOBER, IT APPEARS THAT SINGAPORE IS NOW TAKING THE BULK OF U.S. MILITARY AIR TRAFFIC OF THIS TYPE.

'WITH SPECULATION THAT THE SINGAPORE AIR FORCE MAY MOVE TO THE PRESENT INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT OF PAYA LEBAR IN THE 1980'S WHEN A BIG NEW AIR TERMINAL IS OPENED ELSEWHERE, THE U.S. GOVERNMENT IS UNDERSTOOD TO WANT TO HAVE ITS PLANES USE THE CONSIDERABLY LARGER AND IMPROVED FACILITIES THAT WOULD BE AVAILABLE AT PAYA LEBAR.

'COMMANDER LT. GENERAL JAMES HILL, COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF THE U.S. AIR FORCE IN THE PACIFIC AND MAJOR GENERAL FREDDIE POSTON, COMMANDER OF THE 13TH AIR FORCE IN PHILIPPINES RECENTLY VISITED SINGAPORE AND HAD TALKS WITH THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE, MR. GOH KENG SWEE.

'A U.S. EMBASSY SPOKESMAN DENIED THAT THESE DISCUSSIONS HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE USE OF SINGAPORE'S AIRPORT BUT REFUSED TO SAY WHAT THESE TALKS HAD COVERED. HOWEVER, IT IS KNOWN THAT GENERAL HILL INSPECTED THE PAYA LEBAR FACILITIES ON A VISIT LASTING SIX HOURS.

'OBSERVERS SEE SOME SIGNIFICANCE IN ALL THIS WITH THE SUDDEN AND VIRTUALLY UNANNOUNCED VISIT TO SINGAPORE BY THE RUSSIAN DEPUTY
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FOREIGN MINISTER FIRYUBIN TEN DAYS AGO. LITTLE WAS SAID ABOUT THE MEETINGS HE HAD WITH SINGAPORE'S LEADERS BUT IN HIS SUBSEQUENT VISIT TO MALAYSIA AND THAILAND, THE SOVIET MINISTER PLACED CONSIDERABLE STRESS ON RUSSIA'S OPPOSITION TO THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS, (ASEAN) OF WHICH SINGAPORE IS A MEMBER, BECOMING A MILITARY ORGANIZATION.

'ADRIAN PORTER, BBC, SINGAPORE.'"

3. EMBASSY COMMENT IN SEPTTEL.
HOLDRIDGE

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
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Draft Date: 21 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780125-0950
Format: TEL
From: SINGAPORE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780342/aaaabjhm.tel
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Litigation History:
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